

Do Your Loved Ones Know You Have Earned Military Funeral Honors?

Since January 1, 2000, all eligible veterans are entitled by law* to receive this benefit.

But, it has to be requested, and too many veterans in Washington are being laid to rest without this final tribute.

If, as a Veteran, you wish to receive Military Funeral Honors, it is important to tell your family now, so they will be prepared to ensure your final request is honored.

During your family's initial visit to a funeral home, they will need to request that Military Funeral Honors be provided at the service.

The Funeral Home Director will need to know the following:

- * Name of deceased, date of birth, Social Security number, form DD-214 (discharge), or any other proof of veteran status or eligibility for burial honors.
- * Branch of Service (Active, Reserve or National Guard).
- * Type of Service (Wartime, Active Duty Retired, Reserve/National Guard Retired).
- * Dates of Service.
- * Special Awards or Medals (such as Purple Heart)

The Funeral Director should then contact the Military Funeral Honors Program Manager for Washington – CSM (Ret) Bill Graham at (253) 512-8786.

For more information, visit <http://www.militaryfuneralhonors.osd.mil/> or call (253) 512-8786.

**Public Law 106-65 states a Military Funeral Honors detail will consist of not less than two members of the Armed Forces and the detail will, at a minimum, perform a ceremony that includes the folding and presentation of the American Flag to the next of kin and the playing of TAPS.*

Who is Eligible for Military Funeral Honors?

- * Military members on active duty or in the Selected Reserve.
- * Former military members who served on active duty and departed under conditions other than dishonorable.
- * Former military members who completed at least one term of enlistment or period of initial obligated service in the Selected Reserve and departed under conditions other than dishonorable.
- * Former military members discharged from the Selected Reserve due to a disability incurred or aggravated in the line of duty.

Attention: VSO Honor Guards!
Are You a Partner of the Washington State Military Funeral Honors Program?

Each year, nearly 15,000 veterans in the State of Washington pass away.

Each and every one of them may be entitled to Military Funeral Honors, if requested.

To meet the demands of honoring those requests, the Military Funeral Honors Program needs your help!

Since May 2004, the Military Funeral Honors program, under the Washington Army National Guard, has certified 80 Veteran Service Organizations statewide as partners in providing this service for Washington Veterans.

Certification allows the MFH Program to pay the post or chapter of a VSO Honor Guard, conducting services with a National Guard team, \$50.00 per service!

To become certified, contact Bill Graham at 253-512-8786 or William.grahamjr@us.army.mil

You will receive a letter of introduction to the Military Funeral Honors Program, a video to be viewed by all members of your honor guard, and must agree to follow the Department of Defense "chain of events" agenda for delivering the Military Funeral Honors. You will then receive an Authorized Provider Partnership Program (AP3) Certificate and special AP3 pins for each member of your Honor Guard.

"This program is a partnership," said MFH Program Manager Bill Graham. "The majority of the VSO Honor Guards in this state have been providing Funeral Honors for years. By becoming certified, we can help them by providing the Active duty personnel to augment their team and also give some monetary assistance to their associated post or chapter."

Graham's teams have provided MFH to 1000 veterans during the first eight months of fiscal year 2006. That number has increased from 175 services in 2005 and 48 in 2004. Approximately 40% of those services were performed at Tahoma National Cemetery in Kent, while the majority of them have been at private cemeteries or Memorial Services throughout Washington.

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